

### Amendments to the Claims

Please amend claims 1-8, 11-18, 21-40, 43, and 45-52, and please add new claims 53-55, in accordance with the list of claims that begins on the following page, and which replaces all prior versions of the claims in the application.

## List of Claims

1. (currently amended) A computer based method of eliminating redundant rules from a data administration system comprising the steps of:

[[a)]] receiving a new rule having a timestamp parameter;  
comparing the timestamp parameter of the new rule with a timestamp parameter  
of an existing rule;

determining if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is later than the  
timestamp parameter of the existing rule;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule to the existing rule;

and if so,

[[b)]] comparing at least one additional parameter of the new rule  
with a corresponding parameter of an the existing rule in said data  
administration system; and

[[c)]] eliminating the existing rule ~~when~~ if the new rule  
encompasses the existing rule.

2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein ~~the new rule includes at least one parameter and the step of comparing includes comparing the at least one parameter of the new rule with the corresponding parameter of the existing rule~~ the new rule encompasses the existing rule if the at least one additional parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim 2 1, wherein the new rule encompasses the existing rule when the at least one additional parameter of the new rule matches the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.
4. (currently amended) The method of claim 2 1, wherein the new rule encompasses the existing rule when the at least one additional parameter of the new rule defines a class of parameters that includes the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.
5. (currently amended) The method of claim 2 1, wherein said at least one additional parameter includes one of a ~~timestamp~~, node name, domain name, receiver name, event name, or event type.
6. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein ~~the existing rule includes a plurality of parameters and the step of comparing includes comparing each of the plurality of parameters with the corresponding parameter of the existing rule~~ the method further comprises logging an event indicating a database inconstancy if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is not later than the timestamp parameter of the existing rule.
7. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one additional parameter of the new rule includes each additional parameter of the new rule, and wherein the method further comprises:

~~the step of comparing includes the steps of:~~

- ~~a) determining whether the existing rule has precedence over the new rule; and~~
- ~~b) comparing the existing rule with the new rule if the existing rule has precedence over the new rule.~~

comparing the timestamp parameter of the new rule with a timestamp parameter of an additional existing rule;

determining if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is later than the timestamp parameter of the additional existing rule;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule to the additional existing rule;

and if so,

comparing each additional parameter of the new rule with a corresponding parameter of the additional existing rule in said data administration system; and

eliminating the additional existing rule if each additional parameter of the new rule encompasses a corresponding parameter of the additional existing rule.

8. (currently amended) The method of claim 7, wherein ~~the step of determining the precedence includes determining whether the existing rule precedes the new rule in time.~~ the method further comprises including a unique key with each timestamp

parameter so the system can distinguish between entries that occur at substantially the same time.

9. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of eliminating the existing rule includes the step of removing the existing rule from the data administration system.

10. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of eliminating the existing rule includes the step of flagging said rule so that it is ignored by the data administration system.

11. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of eliminating the existing rule includes the step of moving said rule to ~~another~~ a table so ~~that it~~ said rule is ignored by the data administration system.

12. (currently amended) In a computing system, [[A]] a method of eliminating a redundant rule from a data administration system comprising the steps of:

[[a)]] receiving a new rule having a plurality of parameters including ~~at least one~~ a parameter that indicates whether the new rule was added by an administrator;

reading and storing the plurality of parameters of the new rule;

comparing the parameter that indicates whether the new rule was added by the administrator, with a corresponding parameter of an existing rule;

determining if, both, the new rule was added by the administrator and the existing rule was added by a subordinate;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule to the existing rule;

and if so,

[[b)]] comparing the at least one additional parameter of the new rule with a corresponding parameter of an the existing rule in said data administration system; and

[[c)]] eliminating the existing rule ~~when~~ if the at least one additional parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.

13. (currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the ~~new rule~~ encompasses the existing rule when at least one additional parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule if the at least one additional parameter of the new rule matches the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.

14. (currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the ~~new rule~~ encompasses the existing rule then at least one additional parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule if the at least one additional parameter of the new rule defines a class of parameters that includes the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.

15. (currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein said at least one additional parameter includes one of a timestamp, node name, domain name, receiver name, event name, or event type.

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the ~~existing rule includes a plurality of parameters and the step of comparing includes comparing each of the plurality of parameters with the corresponding parameter of the existing rule~~ method further comprises logging an event indicating a database inconsistency if the new rule was added by the subordinate and the existing rule was added by the administrator.

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the new rule encompasses the existing rule if the at least one additional parameter of the new rule has a wildcard character, and the at least one additional parameter of the new rule having the wildcard character includes the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.  
~~the step of comparing includes the steps of:~~

- ~~a) determining whether the existing rule has precedence over the new rule; and~~
- ~~b) comparing the existing rule with the new rule if the existing rule has precedence over the new rule.~~

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the method further comprises: the step of determining the precedence includes determining whether the existing rule precedes the new rule in time.

comparing the parameter that indicates whether the new rule was added by the administrator, with a corresponding parameter of an additional existing rule;

determining if, both, the new rule was added by the administrator and the additional existing rule was not added by the administrator;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule to the additional existing rule;

and if so,

comparing at least one additional parameter of the new rule with a corresponding parameter of the additional existing rule in said data administration system; and

eliminating the additional existing rule if the at least one additional parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the additional existing rule.

19. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of eliminating the existing rule includes the step of removing the existing rule from the data administration system.

20. (original) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of eliminating the existing rule includes the step of flagging said rule so that it is ignored by the data administration system.



21. (currently amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of eliminating the existing rule includes the step of moving said rule to ~~another~~ a table so ~~that it~~ said rule is ignored by the data administration system.

22. (currently amended) ~~A system~~ An apparatus for eliminating redundant rules from a data administration system comprising:

a) an entry device for entering a new rule having a timestamp parameter, into the data administration system; and

b) a compare unit for comparing the new rule with an existing rule and eliminating the existing rule if the new rule encompasses the existing rule~~[[.]]~~, wherein the compare unit is configured to perform the following operations:

comparing the timestamp parameter of the new rule with a timestamp parameter of the existing rule;

determining if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is later than the timestamp parameter of the existing rule;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule to the existing rule;

and if so,

comparing at least one additional parameter of the new rule with a corresponding parameter of the existing rule in said data administration system; and

eliminating the existing rule if the at least one additional  
parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding  
parameter of the existing rule.

23. (currently amended) The ~~system apparatus~~ of claim 22 ~~further including means  
for eliminating the existing rule when the new rule encompasses the existing rule~~  
wherein the at least one additional parameter of the new rule includes each additional  
parameter of the new rule.

24. (currently amended) The ~~system apparatus~~ of claim 22, wherein the operations  
further comprise: ~~new rule includes at least one parameter and the compare unit  
compares the at least one parameter of the new rule with the corresponding parameter  
of the existing rule~~

comparing the timestamp parameter of the new rule with a timestamp parameter  
of an additional existing rule;

determining if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is later than the  
timestamp parameter of the additional existing rule;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule to the additional existing

rule;

and if so,

comparing at least one additional parameter of the new rule  
with a corresponding parameter of the additional existing rule in  
said data administration system; and  
eliminating the additional existing rule if the new rule  
encompasses the additional existing rule.

25. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ apparatus of claim 24, wherein the ~~new rule~~  
~~encompasses the existing rule when the~~ at least one additional parameter of the new  
rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule if the at least one  
additional parameter of the new rule matches the corresponding parameter of the  
existing rule.

26. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ apparatus of claim 24, wherein the ~~at least one~~  
~~new rule encompasses the existing rule when the~~ at least one additional parameter of  
the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule if the at  
least one additional parameter of the new rule defines a class of parameters that  
includes the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.

27. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ apparatus of claim ~~22~~ 24, wherein the ~~compare~~  
~~unit determines whether the new rule has precedence over the existing rule and~~  
~~compares the existing rule with the new rule if the new rule has precedence over the~~  
~~existing rule~~ the operations further comprise including a unique key with each

timestamp parameter so the system can distinguish between entries that occur at substantially the same time.

28. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ apparatus of claim 27, wherein the ~~determination of the precedence includes the determination of whether the existing rule precedes the new rule in time~~ additional existing rule is a next rule in a database after the existing rule.

29. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ apparatus of claim 24, wherein said at least one additional parameter of the new rule includes one of a ~~timestamp~~, node name, domain name, receiver name, event name, or event type.

30. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ apparatus of claim 22 27, wherein ~~the new rule includes a plurality of parameters and the compare unit compares each of the plurality of parameters with the corresponding parameter of the existing rule~~ the operations further comprise logging an event indicating a database inconstancy if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is not later than the timestamp parameter of the existing rule.

31. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ apparatus of claim 22 30, wherein eliminating the existing rule includes the removal of the existing rule from the data administration system.

32. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ apparatus of claim 22 30, wherein eliminating the existing rule includes ~~the~~ flagging of the existing rule so that it is ignored by the data administration system.

33. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ apparatus of claim 22 30, wherein the step of eliminating the existing rule includes the step of moving said rule to ~~another~~ a table so ~~that it~~ said rule is ignored by the data administration system.

34. (currently amended) A computing system for eliminating redundant rules from a data administration system comprising:

a) ~~an entry device~~ means for entering a new rule into the data administration system, the new rule including at least one parameter, and wherein the at least one parameter includes a timestamp parameter;

b) ~~a compare unit~~ means for comparing the new rule with an existing rule having a timestamp parameter, wherein the means for comparing is configured to perform the following operations: at least one parameter of the new rule with a corresponding parameter of an existing rule in the data administration system; and

e) ~~means for eliminating the existing rule when the at least one parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.~~

comparing the timestamp parameter of the new rule with the timestamp parameter of the existing rule;

determining if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is later than the timestamp parameter of the existing rule;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule to the existing rule;

and if so,

comparing at least one additional parameter of the new rule

with a corresponding parameter of the existing rule in said data

administration system; and

eliminating the existing rule if the new rule encompasses the

existing rule, wherein the new rule encompasses the existing rule if

the at least one additional parameter of the new rule encompasses

the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.

35. (currently amended) The system of claim 34, wherein the at least one additional parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule when the at least one additional parameter of the new rule matches the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.

36. (currently amended) The system of claim 34, wherein the at least one additional parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule when the at least one additional parameter of the new rule defines a class of parameters that includes the parameter of the existing rule.

37. (currently amended) The system of claim 34, wherein ~~the compare unit determines whether the new rule has precedence over the existing rule and compares~~

~~the at least one parameter of the new rule with the corresponding parameter of the existing rule if the new rule has precedence over the existing rule~~  
a unique key is included with each timestamp parameter so the means for comparing can distinguish between entries that occur at substantially the same time.

38. (currently amended) The system of claim 37, wherein the operations further comprise: ~~the determination of the precedence includes the determination of whether the existing rule precedes the new rule in time.~~

comparing the timestamp parameter of the new rule with a timestamp parameter of an additional existing rule;

determining if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is later than the timestamp parameter of the additional existing rule;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule to the additional existing rule;

and if so,

comparing at least one additional parameter of the new rule with a corresponding parameter of the additional existing rule in said data administration system; and

eliminating the additional existing rule if the new rule encompasses the additional existing rule.

39. (currently amended) The system of claim 34, wherein said at least one parameter of the new rule includes one of a ~~timestamp~~, node name, domain name, receiver name, or event type.

40. (currently amended) The system of claim 34, wherein the ~~existing rule includes a plurality of parameters and the compare unit compares each of the plurality of parameters with the corresponding parameter of the existing rule~~ operations further comprise logging an event indicating a database inconstancy if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is not later than the timestamp parameter of the existing rule.

41. (original) The system of claim 34, wherein eliminating the existing rule includes the removal of the existing rule from the data administration system.

42. (original) The system of claim 34, wherein eliminating the existing rule includes the flagging of said rule so that it is ignored by the data administration system.

43. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ system of claim 34, wherein the step of eliminating the existing rule includes the step of moving said rule to ~~another~~ a table so ~~that it~~ said rule is ignored by the data administration system.

44. (original) The system of claim 34, wherein the compare unit is configured to eliminate an existing rule from the data administration system if it is a member of a group for which a new rule is being added.



45. (currently amended) A computer based method for eliminating redundant rules from a data administration system, ~~said data administration system having at least one existing rule having a plurality of parameters~~, the method comprising:

[[a)]] entering a new rule into the data administration system, the new rule ~~includes~~ including a plurality of parameters, wherein the plurality of parameters include a timestamp parameter; and

[[b)]] passing the plurality of parameters of the new rule to a compare unit, wherein the compare unit is configured to perform the following operations:

comparing the timestamp parameter of the new rule with a timestamp parameter of a first existing rule having a plurality of parameters;

determining if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is later than the timestamp parameter of the first existing rule;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule;

and if so,

comparing each additional parameter of the new rule with a corresponding parameter in the plurality of parameters of the first existing rule in said data administration system;

eliminating the first existing rule if the new rule encompasses the first existing rule, wherein the new rule encompasses the first existing rule if each additional parameter of the new rule

encompasses the corresponding parameter of the first existing rule;

and

determining if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is

later than the timestamp parameter of a second existing rule;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule;

and if so,

comparing each additional parameter of the

new rule with a corresponding parameter of the

second existing rule in said data administration

system; and

eliminating the second existing rule if the new

rule encompasses the second existing rule, wherein

the new rule encompasses the second existing rule if

each additional parameter of the new rule

encompasses the corresponding parameter of the

second existing rule.

~~compare each of said plurality of parameters of the new rule with each of the  
corresponding parameters of the at least one existing rule, and~~

~~eliminating the at least one existing rule from said data administration system  
when each of the plurality of parameters of the new rule encompasses a corresponding  
one of the plurality of parameters of said at least one existing rule.~~

46. (currently amended) The method of claim 45, wherein each of the parameters of the new rule encompasses the corresponding one of the plurality of parameters of the ~~at least one~~ first existing rule when each of the parameters of the new rule matches the corresponding one of the parameters of the ~~at least one~~ first existing rule.

47. (currently amended) The method of claim 45, wherein each of the parameters of the new rule encompasses the corresponding one of the plurality of parameters of the ~~at least one~~ first existing rule when each of the parameters of the new rule defines a class of parameters that includes the corresponding one of the plurality of the ~~parameter parameters~~ of the ~~at least one~~ first existing rule.

48. (currently amended) The method of claim 45, wherein ~~the parameters of the at least one existing rule includes a timestamp, the parameters of the new rule includes a timestamp, and the compare unit compares the timestamp of the at least one existing rule with the timestamp of the new rule to determine whether the existing rule precedes the new rule in time.~~ the method further comprises logging an event indicating a database inconstancy if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is not later than the timestamp parameter of the first existing rule.

49. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[45]]~~ 48, wherein ~~the data administration system further includes a plurality of existing rules, each having a plurality of parameters, and the compare unit compares the parameters of the new rule with the corresponding parameters of each of the existing rules.~~ the method further

comprises including a unique key with each timestamp parameter so the system can distinguish between entries that occur at substantially the same time.

50. (currently amended) The method of claim 45, wherein the step of eliminating the first existing rule includes the step of removing the first existing rule from the data administration system.

51. (currently amended) The method of claim 45, wherein the step of eliminating the first existing rule includes the step of flagging the first existing rule so that it is ignored by the data administration system.

52. (currently amended) The method of claim 45, wherein the step of eliminating the first existing rule includes the step of moving said first existing rule to another a table so ~~that it~~ said first existing rule is ignored by the data administration system.

53. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein the new rule encompasses the existing rule if the at least one additional parameter of the new rule has a wildcard character, and the at least one additional parameter of the new rule having the wildcard character includes the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.

54. (new) The system of claim 34, wherein the at least one additional parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule if the at least one additional parameter of the new rule has a wildcard character, and the at least

one additional parameter of the new rule having the wildcard character includes the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.

55. (new) A method of eliminating redundant rules from a data administration system comprising the steps of:

receiving a new rule having a timestamp parameter;

comparing the timestamp parameter of the new rule with a timestamp parameter of an existing rule;

determining if the timestamp parameter of the new rule is later than the timestamp parameter of the existing rule;

and if not so,

terminating comparing the new rule to the existing rule;

and if so,

comparing at least one additional parameter of the new rule with a corresponding parameter of the existing rule in said data administration system; and

eliminating the existing rule if the new rule encompasses the existing rule, wherein the new rule encompasses the existing rule if the at least one additional parameter of the new rule encompasses the corresponding parameter of the existing rule.